HAṬHARATNĀVALĪ

(A Treatise on haṭhayoga)

of

ŚRĪNIVĀSAYOGĪ

Critically Edited
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About the author

śrīnivāsa, the author of *haṭharatnāvalī* has given some details about himself in the text. On the basis of this we learn that he was an erudite scholar well versed in the *vedas, vedānta, tantra, nyāya* and *yoga*. From his narration, it appears that he wrote commentaries on the works of *śaśadhara* and *maṇikānta miśra*. He also composed the work called *vedāntaparibhāṣā*.

He was the resident of the Tirabhukta region. His father was a great astrologer, probably named *saravara* as per the Nepali commentator and the name of his mother was *somāmbā*. He adores himself with the titles such as *kalitārkika-cuḍāmaṇī, sakala-nyāyaśāstra-saṃpradāya-pravartaka, nyāyācārya, sakala-haṭhayoga-pravartaka, jayalakṣmī* and *mahāyogīndra*.

From the frequent quotations of *haṭhapradīpikā*, it is clear that he received an inspiration to compose *haṭharatnāvalī* from *svātmārāma* although *śrīnivāsa* criticises him on some points.

Contents of the text

śrīnivāsa calls his treatise of *haṭhayoga* as *haṭharatnāvalī*. Alternatively he also calls his work as *haṭhayogaratnasaraṇī* or *ratnāvalī*. The contents are divided into four chapters. The distribution of various topics is as follows:

Chapter I

In this chapter after introducing himself, *śrīnivāsa* gives the purpose of his treatise HR. He gives various definitions of *yoga* and explains *mahāyoga* under which he describes *mantrayoga, layayoga, rājayoga* and *haṭhayoga*. He explains the relationship of *rājayoga* with *haṭhayoga* on the same lines as of HP. He gives elaborate description of eightfold

purificatory processes called *aṣṭakarmas* in place of usual *ṣaṭkarmas,* according to the tradition of his *guru.* He criticizes *svātmārāma* for not including *cakrikarma* under the purificatory processes. He gives a great importance to the practice of *cakrikarma* and recommends it to be practised during *jalabasti* instead of using a tube to be inserted in the rectum for which he also quotes the authority of *yogī carpaṭi.* He provides additional information on the *karmas* like *nauli, basti* and *kapālabhrānti* by giving different varieties. Under *nauli* he describes two types, namely, *bāhya nauli* and *antarā.* But the distinction between the two is not clear. *basti* is also described of two types—*jalabasti* and *vāyubasti* for which the use of *cakrikarma* is recommended. In *kapālabhāti* a variety is given wherein the head is moved towards left and right while exhaling rapidly. In the practice of *gajakaraṇī,* instead of plain water, jaggery water or coconut water is recommended.

The purpose of these *karmas* is not only to remove the excess of fat and mucus but to purify six *cakras,* to provide basis for *prāṇāyāma,* to remove all kinds of disorders and to contribute to the healthy body which is an instrument on the path of liberation. It is also described how different *karmas* purify specific *cakras.*

The other topics dealt with in this chapter are description of a hut for *yoga* practice, *mitāhāra*, recommended and prohibited food items, helpful and harmful things in attaining the success in *yoga* and ultimately the list of great *siddhas* who attained success through *haṭhayoga* and conquered death.

Chapter II

This chapter elaborately describes nine *kumbhakas* and ten *mudrās.* Alongwith the eight well-known *kumbhakas,*

one more *kumbhaka* is described under the name of *bhujangīkaraṇa*. *uḍḍiyāna* is called *bāhyoḍḍyāna*. *vajroli* and *khecarī mudrās* have been dealt with in great detail. The synonyms of *iḍā*, *piṅgalā* and *suṣumnā* given here are not usually found in other *haṭha* texts.

Chapter III

This is mainly devoted to the elaborate description of 84 *āsanas*. The author starts with the topic of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*, but describes only *mānasa niyamas* and *kāyika niyamas*. No explanation of these is given.

āsana being the first component of *haṭhayoga* the author deals with this topic elaborately. He gives the list of 84 *āsanas*, but explains the techniques of only 36 *āsanas*. He mentions in the list four types of *padmāsana*, six types of *mayūrāsana*, three types of *kūrmāsana*, and five types of *kukkuṭāsana*. After dealing with the topic of *āsanas*, he discusses the importance, technique and the effects of *prāṇāyāma*.

Chapter IV

It deals with *samādhi* and the techniques like *nādānusandhāna*, four states of progress in *yoga*, such as *ārambha*, *ghaṭa*, *paricaya* and the *niṣpatti* and the experiences during each of these states.

There is a discussion of *piṇḍa* and *brahmāṇḍa* in which elaborate description of 14 *nāḍīs* is given as well as philosophical statements from different sources like *sūtasaṃ hitā*, *viṣṇupurāṇa*, *bhagavadgītā* and different schools of philosophy such as *nyāya*, *prābhākara*, *sāṃkhya*, *advaita* have been briefly mentioned. This chapter seems to be hurriedly and abruptly ended.